

ARE YOU LEARNING TO RIDE A WHEEL?

Champion Bald Here Tells You How to Find Health and Pleasure in the Pastime.

There has been a great deal of discussion of late on the part of medical men and women over the advantages and injuries to health that come from riding the bicycle. The "monkey hump," the "bicycle face," "bicycle insanity," injury to various physical organs from the jar of riding over rough roads or sitting upon improperly constructed saddles, and the thousand and one other evils, whether real or imaginary, have been harped upon through the press by these people. There are always cranks ready to attack any innovation that disturbs the routine of everyday life or jostles against their sensibilities, setting it down at once as a harmful and highly injurious practice. What I say upon this matter must be said from the standpoint of a layman, who knows as much about the practice of medicine as an old cow does about knitting work. But from the standpoint of a bicycle rider of a good many years' experience, both of road and park riding and race track competition, I am ready to defend the practice. When I first began to ride, as a puny boy, it was merely for pleasure, but during a single year I gained so greatly in health and strength that I decided to enter race track competition, and almost continuously since I have followed the occupation of a racing man. During all that time my physical health has improved vastly, and I never experienced an hour's inconvenience or suffering as a result of bicycle riding. If doctors generally, or even the large majority of them, were opposed to bicycle riding and could cite instances of injuries resulting from it, I would not expect that anything that I could say would be taken in rebuttal of such evidence. But they are not. In fact, I know of one physician who conducts a large sanitarium at Geneva, N. Y., where all sorts of nervous and chronic diseases are treated, who relies almost as much on the bicycle as upon his medicines and baths for the improvement of his patients. On any fine day his bicycle brigade may be seen peddling about the streets of the village or the large park that fronts the institution, and he says that in many cases improvement dates from the day they begin to ride the wheel. And he is only one of the many doctors who will say the same thing. Several of the more prominent of the physicians of Syracuse, where I am now living, are ardent devotees of the wheel, and prescribe it for their patients, both male and female.

THE BICYCLE "FACE" AND "HUMP."
All the talk about the "face," the "hump" and the "mania" I am inclined from my own experience to set down as unworthy of consideration. They simply don't exist, except in cases of a few extremists or the minds of cranky doctors who never rode a bicycle. As far as my acquaintance among bicycle riders goes, the bicycle face is a healthy, happy face that looks as though its wearer was entirely capable of taking care of himself and enjoying life thoroughly. The "hump" has a little more tangible existence, for there are some riders who affect a scorching position whenever they ride, and do have the appearance of being deformed. The only "mania" that is very apparent among wheelmen is a great enthusiasm for the wheel, for which no one who is swayed from experience of the pleasures of bicycle riding will blame them. All the talk about nervous tension and that sort of thing as a result of the continuous effort in keeping the wheel balanced and guiding it in and out among vehicles and pedestrians amounts to about

as much as it would to talk about the nervous tension of walking along a crowded street, maintaining equilibrium, and not running into other pedestrians. Learning to ride is like learning to walk. Once it is done, no conscious effort is required to keep in an upright position and to keep the feet moving.

The editor of the Journal has asked me to write something about how the beginner should ride in order that he may get the most good out of his work in the way of improvement to his health. If anything that I can say will be of advantage or encouragement to the young rider, or to the old rider who has just become impressed with the delights of wheeling, I shall be very glad.

HOW THE YOUNG RIDER SHOULD BEGIN.
Assuming in the first place that you have purchased your wheel and had the saddle adjusted at the proper height, which is now done wherever wheels are sold, and that you have learned the art of mounting and maintaining your equilibrium in a riding academy under an instructor, or, better still, in the hands of a friend upon the asphalt, you are ready to begin preparing yourself for the long rides that you probably intend to take later in the season. For the first week do not ride more than a mile or two, or perhaps three miles, morning and evening, say at 8 or 9 a. m. and 4 or 5 p. m. If you master the wheel readily, you may be able to exceed this, but in no case ride long enough to get thoroughly tired out. The new rider tires before he realizes it, and great harm may be done by too severe exertion at this stage. Smooth roads should be chosen, where traffic is light. The green rider is liable to lose his head and get a spill on a crowded thoroughfare. Don't try any trick riding or hill climbing. You ought to be able to do five miles and return by the end of the week if the roads are entirely favorable and a good rest is taken before starting back.

DON'T RIDE TOO FAR.
Having reached this point, don't think at once that you can break records either for time or distance. I can think of nothing more ill advised than for a rider who has had experience of four or five miles of smooth pavements or level country roads setting out for a long, hard day's ride. By this I don't mean a century run, either. I have seen riders used up for the season by foolishly attempting too much while yet green and soft. Keep a check on your ambition at this time and don't over-estimate your ability. Although riding your new wheel seems as easy as flying, remember that young birds have to learn to fly and that even carrier pigeons tire out. Turn back before you begin to feel weary, and don't, if you value your peace of mind, try to urge the pace for older riders. If you do, you will find yourself used up almost before you know it, even if they do not try to have fun with you, which they do not be eminently justified in doing, and set you a killing pace that you must keep or be left behind.

My advice to every road rider would be: Don't rush hills. It sounds very well to say that you have ridden over a rough and hilly course without dismounting, but it will have done you no good. If the hill is one that you cannot climb, going at an easy natural gait, get off and walk. It will pay you in the end. It will save physical wear and tear that cannot be estimated and much strain upon your machine. It will also obviate much injurious effort of the heart. More injury to the vital organ may be caused in this way than by a hundred hot finishes on the racing track.

Above everything, when on long tours or short ones, be temperate. Avoid all stimulants, using water as your only beverage. Drink as little as possible. When thirsty, rinse your mouth with water before

swallowing any. You will be surprised how little will then be required to allay your thirst. When you get hungry, stop and eat until you are satisfied, but do not start again inside of an hour or longer. An hour and a half is better. Let the same moderation and good sense apply to your bicycle riding as to your other affairs, and it will not be more likely to harm you.

DON'T LIKE BLOOMER COSTUME.
The most comfortable, and undoubtedly the most healthful bicycle wear for male riders on long trips, consists of a sweater, loose fitting bloomers and golf stockings. Personally, I prefer high shoes, but that is a matter of taste and individual choice. For ladies I admire the short skirt, with high boots, preferring it to bloomers. The shirt waist I prefer to the sweater, as it looks less sporty, though it may not be so advantageous from a hygienic standpoint. There has recently been a great deal of discussion about the proper saddle for ladies. Lady riders with whom I have talked on the subject generally approve of a short and very broad saddle of soft leather, and made with a short nose.

All riders, male and female, will be wise not to be too much afraid of getting the "monkey hump." What I regard as the correct position on the wheel allows considerable weight to rest upon the handlebars. If you sit as straight as a ramrod your spine gets all the jar of the wheel, and your calves all the physical development that is gained. If part of the weight is thrown upon the arms, the muscles of the chest, and to a greater or less extent of the whole body, will be the gainers. The accompanying cut is from a photograph of what I believe to be a good, sensible position for the road rider.

E. C. Bald

THE WHIRL OF THE WHEEL.

The wheelmen of the Twenty-second Regiment intend to be represented in cycling events this season. On Sunday, May 3, a century run under the supervision of Company H will take place and the route will be to Katonah, L. I. There will be three divisions of riders—slow, fast and racing—and special prizes will be given in each class.

At the recent meeting of the Ascension Wheelmen, a new organization, which holds its meetings Saturday nights in the Hudson building, corner of Thirty-seventh street and Eighth avenue, the following officers were elected: Captain, E. M. Henry; Lieutenant, Harry Gray; Secretary and treasurer, W. S. Reynolds.

President Dixie Hines, of the Quill Club Wheelmen, has returned from an extensive Southern trip greatly benefited in health.

The latest effort straightaway is the reported mile of O. M. Dennis, who, at Denver, Col., is reported to have covered a mile in 1:11.35 with the wind at his back.

The Yorkville Wheelmen have arranged the following runs: April 5, Bergen Point; April 12, Totteville; April 19, Tarrytown; April 26, Flatlands.

Company E, Eighth Regiment, and the Greenwich Wheelmen will hold a joint athletic and bicycle meet Friday, May 1, at the Eighth Regiment Armory.

The committee having in charge the formation of a local body of L. A. W. members in New York held a meeting Tuesday night, at which the sub-committee reported. Another session will be held next Tuesday night at the house of Dr. O'Connell, No. 104 West Sixty-first street, when it is expected that the constitution and by-laws will be ready for adoption.

Arrangements have been completed for a meeting between John S. Johnson and Jaap Eden, to take place in Holland. They will try conclusions in a skating contest as well as in a cycle race.

A FINE NEW GAME BIRD.

Massachusetts Is Breeding Wild Pheasants.

SUPERIOR TO THE ENGLISH BREED.

Now the Mongolian Pheasant Thrives in America and Is a Great Aid to Farmers.

The State of Massachusetts, through its Commissioners of Inland Fisheries and Game, is endeavoring to stock its country districts with the Mongolian pheasant. The first considerable experiment in this line was made last year with results that would indicate ultimate success.

The Mongolian pheasant is believed to possess many advantages over the English pheasant, being handsomer and harder, and more of a true game bird, while it is more prolific and better adapted to a cold climate. These pheasants are found in large numbers in Siberia, which would indicate their ability to survive through a long winter with deep snows.

They were first introduced into this country by Judge Denney, of Oregon. There they have grown prodigiously in numbers. Twenty-eight Mongolian pheasants were introduced into Oregon in 1881. Their phenomenal increase is shown by the fact that Game Warden McGuire, of Oregon, estimates the number killed during three months in 1894, in Linn County alone, at 13,000.

During a recent cold winter in Oregon, when the sleet and snow were heavy, 1,200 dozen of Mongolian pheasants were sent to one dealer in San Francisco. All of these birds were descendants of the original twenty-eight introduced into the State in 1881 by Judge Denney.

The Mongolian pheasant has been found so valuable to the farmers of Oregon, where it has lived exclusively on grubs and worms, destroying many dangerous pests, that the Legislature of the State has passed a law prohibiting the exportation of the birds. This has since been amended so as to permit the exportation of a few specimens to other States wishing to use them for breeding purposes.

"There are many kinds of pheasants, but only two of them are desirable as game birds—the English and Mongolian," says Commissioner Brackett, in his report to the Massachusetts Legislature. "The English, as it is called, is evidently a made-up bird, and does not always breed to form and feather. The ring on the neck is sometimes wanting. In form it more closely resembles the Mongolian than any other variety."

"In disposition it is comparatively logy and tamable, and when artificially bred may be taught to eat food from the hand of the breeder. The hunting of these birds in England shows that they fall an easy prey to the sportsman, in such name can be applied to the wholesale slaughter of these birds by unskilled marksmen."

"The Mongolian is a more active, nervous and untamable bird, more wary, and constantly on the alert. His wealth of plumage and stately bearing distinguish him from other pheasants. Coming, as he does, from Northern China and Southern Siberia, where winters are severe, he is in every way better adapted to our New England climate than is the English."

"Another important point is that they are more prolific. The English, in confinement, lays from twenty to thirty eggs during a season, and the Mongolian from sixty to eighty. In Oregon they have two and sometimes three broods a year."

"There are several parties in New England who have pheasants, some of whom honestly believe that they have the true Mongolian; but from a careful and thorough investigation I am satisfied that, with two exceptions, outside of our aviries there is not a single pure Mongolian pheasant this side of the Alleghenies. A number of persons are breeding the English pheasant for stocking our woods."

"They will undoubtedly cross with the Mongolian, but beyond the loss of time and money no harm will come of this, for it will be a survival of the fittest, and under the same conditions the Mongolian will come to the front every time. Few things about a homestead can be more interesting than a well-stocked aviary of these birds, while the farm is rendered doubly attractive by their beautiful plumage flashing in the sunlight as they sweep over the fields and through the forests."

It has been found in Massachusetts that the Mongolian pheasants are most persistent in their search for all kinds of insects and their larvae. The gypsy moth has been devastating whole districts and has already cost the State hundreds of thousands of dollars. This pest, it is hoped, will be put an end to by the Mongolian pheasant.

Near where the pheasants have been bred at Winchester, Mass., the gypsy moth has been especially plentiful among the trees. Some of the trees which had been burraged as a prevention of the gypsy moth were in the enclosure where the pheasants were kept. The burrages were turned once or twice a week, and only two of the larvae of the gypsy moth were found. The young pheasants were often seen chasing each other, one having a caterpillar or insect in its bill. In two instances this was found to be the larvae of the gypsy moth.

So thoroughly did the pheasants scour the ground of their enclosure that not even frogs were permitted to live there. The large, dusky mottled worms from one to two inches long which infest walnut trees were eaten with the greatest avidity by the pheasants.

Some of the young chicks of the pheasants refused the larvae of the potato bug. The grown-up birds, however, were not so particular and gobbled the larvae with complacency.

The Mongolian pheasant has these two great advantages—he is a fine game bird and excellent for eating. Indeed there are some gourmets who aver that in flavor and tenderness the Mongolian exceeds those of the English pheasant.

As a game bird for the sportsman the Mongolian is quicker in flight than the English pheasant and much more difficult to shoot. He is untamable, and is full of vigor and is always on the alert. As an illustration of the hardness of these birds Commissioner Brackett, of Massachusetts, says that in August last, small boxes containing one hen and six small pheasants about three weeks old was sent to him from Vancouver. They were eight days on the journey, with no other food than dry wheat and water. When the box was placed in the aviary and opened, the pheasants "burst from it like rockets."

At the Massachusetts aviary near Winchester it was found that the young Mongolians are very hardy after they are three weeks old. At that age they begin to fly over the high wire fence into the adjoining woods. These chicks would return to the coop at night until they were six or eight weeks old, when they often stayed away from one to two weeks.

It is believed that they will easily thrive in this country. If the same is true in Massachusetts it is as successful as that in Oregon the Mongolian pheasants may overrun the whole of New England and become common in the woods about New York.

The only question is as to their food in winter. During the winter they eat such food as acorns, berries, haws of the wild rose, berries of the privet, moss found on trees and stumps and grass seed and evergreens. It is not known whether they feed the birds in the winter. They have practically the same habits as the turkey, prairie chicken and quail, and it is believed can find their own food in winter as easily as the ruffed grouse.

SMALL KITCHENS ARE POPULAR.

Larry Huntington and Rigby Busy Filling Orders for "Skip Jacks".

Orders for the popular half-rater class continue to pour in upon the popular designers of the little craft.

Larry Huntington, whose latest creation, The Hope, built for Arthur Iselin, which sailed all around the Question on her trial trip, has received commissions to design and build two little fellows, and has already begun the work of construction. They will be completed about May 1.

Rigby, the Canarsie designer, has finished five more of the boats contracted for by the New York Canoe Club, and lots will be drawn for them in a few days. The boats are designed on the skip-jack pattern, which, judging by results thus far, will be the popular design, and has exhibited the greatest amount of speed combined with stability.

A rumor has been circulated that the Larchmont Yacht Club will during the coming summer add to their schedule of events a cruise to Bar Harbor, Me., and returning sail to the southward of Long Island, reaching this city via Sandy Hook. The arrangement has not been definitely decided upon as yet, but was referred to the club's Regatta Committee with power for action.

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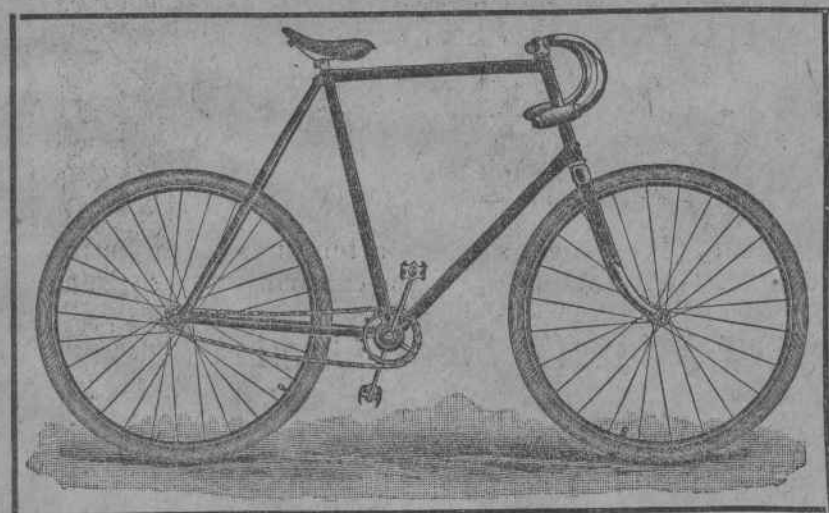
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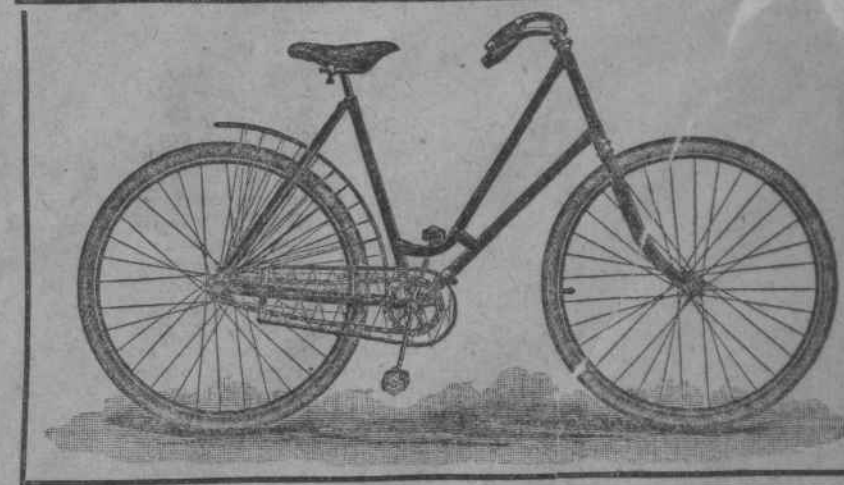
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